

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Petition            ) Application No. C-3131  
from the residents of the Sumner        )  
exchange requesting extended            )  
area service (EAS) to the                ) GRANTED  
Kearney exchange, both served by       )  
Citizens Telecommunications             )  
Company of Nebraska.                    )  
  ) Entered: October 13, 2004

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N     A N D     F I N D I N G S

A petition was filed February 11, 2004, by the residents of the Sumner exchange, served by Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nebraska (Citizens), requesting extended area service (EAS) to the Kearney exchange, also served by Citizens. On February 25, 2004, the Commission verified that the petitions contained the requisite number of signatures. Notice of this Petition was published in The Daily Record, Omaha, Nebraska on February 26, 2004.

As required by Rule 002.27C3 of the Commission Telecommunications Rules and Regulations, Title 291, Chapter 5, a point-to-point usage study was commenced to determine if a community of interest exists. On May 4, 2004, the Commission verified that the traffic study information filed in the above-captioned docket represented a sufficient interest from the customers to meet Commission rules and directed Citizens to establish proposed rates to implement the EAS plan. Citizens provided proposed rates for EAS between the Sumner and Kearney exchanges by the deadline. The proposed monthly rate additive was \$2.70 per line.

On August 3, 2004, the Commission waived Commission Rule No. 002.2.27C5 and approved Citizens sending a letter to all Sumner customers in lieu of a public meeting. On August 24, 2004, the Commission approved balloting for the affected customers in the Sumner exchange pursuant to Rule 002.27C6

After Commission approval of the ballots on August 24, 2004, the ballots were mailed with a return date of no later than October 4, 2004. Of the 168 ballots mailed out, 59.5 percent or 100 responded with 76 ballots in favor of the EAS proposal and 20 ballots indicated opposition to the plan. Four ballots were incomplete or invalid. Thus, 76 percent of the Sumner subscribers who voted, voted in favor of the plan, exceeding the 50 percent benchmark required by Commission Rule. The request to implement extended area service between the Sumner exchange and the Kearney exchange should be granted, with the new service beginning on or before December 15, 2004.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that Application No. C-3131 be, and it is hereby, granted and the EAS between the Sumner exchange and the Kearney exchange, both of which are served by Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nebraska, is approved.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that such rates are to be implemented on or before **December 15, 2004**, concurrent with the availability of the new EAS.

IT IS FINNALLY ORDERED that if the December 15, 2004, implementation date cannot be met; the parties shall advise the Commission on its progress.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 13th day of October, 2004.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Vice Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director